

# THE FIGHTING WORKER

FOR THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

WORKERS OF THE WORLD  
UNITE!



Organ of the Revolutionary Workers League of the U. S.

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SPECIAL AUTO ISSUE

Price: 1 CENT

## FOR A GENERAL STRIKE IN AUTO

for

### THE CLOSED SHOP                      6 HOUR DAY-5 DAY WEEK

**No faith in Frankenstein and other CIO "leaders" who are against strikes and the closed shop!**

**Spread the strike. Strike General Motors. Strike Ford. Turn all lockouts into strikes!**

**No more sell-outs like the General Motors agreement. Fight to win!**

**No faith in arbitration. There are no impartial people in the class war. Workers must deal directly with the bosses!**

**No faith in Murphy, Roosevelt, any and all boss politicians!**

**The workers can depend only on themselves!**

**Prepare the defense of union halls and sit downs against police, vigilantes, Black Legion, National Guard and other strike-breakers!**

**Elect Plant Committees. Elect delegates from the Plant Committees to Local Strike Committees to a National Central Strike Committee in sole and complete control of the General Strike!**

## FOR WORKERS CONTROL OF PRODUCTION

## FOR CLASS WAR AGAINST THE BOSSES

## FOR A REVOLUTIONARY MARXIAN PARTY

## FOR A WORKERS GOVT IN THE U. S.

# Battle Looms in Auto Strike

## General Strike for Closed Shop Order of the Day; Local 205 Leads Fight

DETROIT, March 15.—Almost a hundred thousand workers are on strike here, mostly auto workers. The strike fever is sweeping thousands of other workers into action against their bosses: waiters, waitresses, retail clerks, cigar workers, bakery workers, teamsters, laundry workers. Strikes break almost hourly. The workers are writing a new and glorious page in the history of Detroit as they are awakening to the need of union organization and action to improve their rotten conditions.

The strike wave is not confined to Detroit. Auto workers are out in Lansing in the Reo plant. Hosiery and steel workers are out in Pennsylvania. Taxi drivers, mattress workers and others are out in Chicago. The coal miners are moving up toward the front line. Agricultural workers are fighting the cops in California. A national strike wave is on from coast to coast and from border to border.

### Third Strike Wave

This is the third strike wave since Roosevelt undertook to hold the line for the capitalist class. Hundreds of thousands of workers have gone into action and will go into action against the bosses before it is over.

The auto workers are in the van of the struggle. Under the pressure of the steady increase in the cost of living, low wages, unbearable speed-up and almost military oppression in the shop the auto workers have challenged the rule of the auto bosses in a wave of spontaneous sit down strikes. The demand put up by the CIO "leadership" are meager reforms in wages, hours, conditions and limited recognition of the union. They are far below what the workers are ready to fight for. All over town workers are expressing a willingness to go to bat for the closed shop.

### Local 205

Local 205 of the United Automobile Workers union, composed mostly of workers in the fibre division of the industry has conducted an energetic agitation for the closed shop. This local has about three thousand members and is growing fast. Alone of the locals in the International it has a class struggle policy. The contracts it has won by strike action or the threat of it, are among the best in the industry. Its wage rates are the highest. It has won recognition as the sole collective bargaining agency in a number of plants.

It organized picket demonstrations in front of the Chrysler plants in support of the strikers, calling on them to smash the injunction and to fight for the closed shop. Twenty five thousand copies of a special issue of **Union Action**, the Local's paper, calling for a fight for the closed shop have been distributed in Detroit, Pontiac and Flint. Now it has organized "Daredevil Squads" to go to the assistance of any workers threatened with eviction from plants in which they are sitting down.

If the other locals had the same policy and the same fighting leadership a general strike for

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the closed shop, the six-hour day and five day week would have been under way long before this.

When the auto strikes broke out Roosevelt tried first to steer them into anti-Morgan (General Motors) channels in the interest of the Rockefeller bosses, and then to wash them out by arbitration with the help of Murphy and the CIO.

For their part the bosses used smart tactics, too. They retreated step by step before the tremendous pressure of the workers and made relatively small concessions.

In this way the bosses hoped to get through the current production season and use the time between its close and the opening of the next one to cut the workers' gains and their organization to pieces. That is why General Motors, for example, consented to recognize the union as a collective bargaining agency for six months.

### Bosses Failed

The auto bosses failed. The concessions encouraged the workers to fight. After the first agreement with General Motors the GM workers struck eighteen times in twenty days. At the first snag in the Chrysler negotiations the workers struck. The strike fever has spread to other industries. The victories of these workers has helped to press the auto workers on. Everybody is also thinking about "cracking" Ford's colossal River Rouge plant which employs a hundred thousand men.

The forward surge of the workers washed out the strategy of the bosses and CIO and confronts them now with the danger of a general auto strike. It is now a matter of defense of capitalist property rights for all the bosses and their office boys.

The GM injunction was used as a club over the negotiations to put over the first sell-out agreement. The Chrysler injunction will be used for the same purpose.

### Big Battles Likely

The bosses are getting ready to use force to settle the strikes.

It is getting tense. Murphy has come out openly for the auto bosses and is organizing the forces of law and order to suppress the strikers. If the CIO traitors don't succeed in getting the workers out of the Chrysler plants by some dirty sell-out like the GM agreement an attempt will be made to enforce the Chrysler injunction.

That will mean a battle. The workers are determined to resist and have made the necessary preparations. If the bosses want fight they will get it. Blood will flow. Martial law will be declared. A general strike may develop.

The auto workers are fighting for economic gains. The workers must remember that economic gains are not sufficient. In two strike waves in France last summer and fall the workers won all sorts of demands. By passing a law devaluing the currency the bosses' People's Front government wiped out the wage increases and left the workers where they were before.

### Fight Politically

The workers have got to fight politically as well as on the economic plane. Just voting for boss politicians, however is going to get us nowhere. A year ago February in Spain the workers won a majority of the deputies in the legislature. Five months later, in July, they had to defend their lives against the armed counter-revolution. And they're still fighting.

In Germany the workers had powerful trade unions and political parties. But they didn't have fighting policies and leadership. Today Hitler rules Germany. In Russia in 1917 the workers had militant trade unions and a Bolshevik party. They kicked the bosses out and established the first workers government.

There is no turning back in the class war. Either we, in the United States go forward to proletarian revolution or the bosses will smash us.

Let's build a revolutionary party to smash the boss system and set up a workers government.

## CIO-Stalinists Put Over General Motors Sell-Out; Eyewitness Account

by Sid Okun

DETROIT, March 15. — Two hundred and five delegates from General Motors plants throughout the country assembled in the Hoffman Building, Detroit, Saturday, March 14th to take action on the agreement between the leaders of the United Auto Workers and General Motors. Three members of the Revolutionary Workers League sat in as observers.

After a fourteen-hour fight in which every single provision of the agreement was assailed by the delegates, and after a motion to take a referendum of the GM workers was throttled, the agreement was ratified without a record vote. One out of every four delegates voted against the agreement.

### Delegates Opposed

Early in the session, following the lead of a delegate from the Detroit Cadillac Fleetwood plant who fought constantly against the agreement, close to 40% of the delegates voiced their disagreement with the provisions. The opposition was unorganized, inexperienced and did not counterpose anything of its own.

As the day wore on the big guns were brought into play and bludgeoned the delegates into line.

The agreement gives the workers nothing. The procedure for handling grievances is so cumbersome that it is valueless. No shop stewards are provided for. No minimum wage, no elimina-

tion of speed-up, no settlement of thousands of old cases of discrimination and discharges are included in the agreement. Seniority is so qualified by exceptions as to be meaningless.

Strikes are practically outlawed since they can be called only after months of cumbersome grievance procedure and only by permission of the International officials. How sympathetic to strikes they are they showed during the conference.

"We must stop this chaos," Martin, president of the union shouted, "we must try to restore order."

Brophy defended the agreement against an R.W.L. leaflet distributed at the conference urging the delegates to "Reject the sell-out" and fight for a general strike.

The sell out was put over by a CIO-Stalinist bloc. The arguments of these misleaders was that the agreement was a "minimum" and that the workers must use its provisions to fight for more.

"We can't expect to get everything at once," Hall and the others stated over and over again. One of the delegates got up to tell him that "we got nothing. The only thing we got is what you tell us to imagine is in this agreement."

The motion for a referendum was knocked out by Brophy who claimed the CIO doesn't have the apparatus to conduct a referendum. Strangely enough Brophy didn't mention the small apparatus when he announced that the CIO is going to make a drive to organize 2,000,000 textile workers.

### Publicity for GM

A paragraph in the agreement saying that GM will continue to pay high wages as it has in the past was bitterly assailed. "The whole agreement," one delegate said, "is just a piece of publicity for General Motors."

During the discussion of discrimination, one worker got up, with tears in his eyes, and told the delegation that he had just been fired the day before—on the very day that GM had agreed to the present settlement. Ed Hall ruled him out of order.

The conference was treated near its end to a clever bit of demagoguery by Roy Reuther, who pointed to a short argument between a few workers about losing a few hours in a sit down strike as proof that the workers can't be marshaled to any more struggles. This in the face of 18 spontaneous strikes in 20 days and the mounting tide of strikes all over the country!

Mortimer, vice president of the union, stated, "We've been pretty liberal with you fellows. We've sanctioned all of your strikes ever though we didn't know a thing about them beforehand."

Homer Martin and a Negro delegate, Clarke, ended the discussion with Jehovah-like praise and "thanks to the great John L. Lewis," and "our great president and governor."

### Need Organization

The conference revealed that the workers are pushing far beyond the CIO policy. Instinctively they are opposed to the sell-out compromises of their leadership. They want to fight.

The objective situation favors them against their leaders. The reason they were bludgeoned into acceptance is their failure to formulate a strike strategy to counterpose to the peace policy of their leaders. And also in their failure to organize their opposition.

That is really the task of the revolutionists. The so-called radicals, the Stalinists and Socialists and the Trotskyists all support the CIO as a progressive force and are therefore helping it betray the workers. The Stalinists are the hatchet men for the CIO's dirtiest work.

A fighting policy and leadership must be arise. A left wing must be built. The traitor leaders must be swept aside. The workers will go on to gigantic victories. In the accomplishment of these tasks we will build the League.

## Revolutionary Workers League Active in Auto Strikes

In the present strike situation the Revolutionary Workers League is trying to develop the struggle into a general auto strike and is striving to develop the political class consciousness of the workers. It is openly fighting the CIO policy of collaboration with and sellout to the bosses.

The League has advanced the line of a general strike in auto for the closed shop and the 6 hour, 5 day week. The thousands and thousands of leaflets and **Fighting Workers** distributed with that slogan have been gobbled up by the workers with great enthusiasm. They react quickly to bold ideas.

The **New York Evening Post** produced a copy of a League leaflet calling for a general strike and comments that this was issued by a force trying to push the CIO further than it wants to go.

### Stalinist Sabotage

The Stalinists have made various attempts to harrass the work being done by RWL members. In one union they have stooped to sabotaging and disorganizing the work in a plant. On one occasion Stalinist shop stewards confiscated a number of leaflets, the headline of which read "Fight For A General Strike in Auto for the Closed Shop."

Members of the League in the auto union are participating in the Chrysler and other strikes and have pushed the line for a closed shop. They have organized thousands of workers in Detroit and vicinity around a policy of class struggle.

The pressure for a fight for the closed shop has become enormous. Frankenstein, UAWA organizer has issued a statement to the press that the Auto Union is not fighting for the closed shop.

League members distributed leaflets for the GM ratification conference urging the workers to reject the sell-out and fight for a general strike.

The auto situation gives the League its first big opportunity to show concretely that it is serious about building a revolutionary party by rooting itself among the workers in the basic industries.

### National Drive

The League is concentrating on Detroit at present. Comrades have been sent in from other cities to work in auto plants and the auto union.

At the same time that the RWL locally is driving ahead the organization nationally is getting behind the drive to root it in auto. The campaign for funds has met with a hearty response. To date the following has been collected:

Philadelphia—\$5.00  
New York—\$20.00  
Chicago—\$10.75  
Washington—\$15.00.

But more is needed to push the work, to build a revolutionary force. Send donations to Auto Fund, **Fighting Worker**, 2159 West Division, Chicago, Ill.

## League Gets Multigraph

As part of its drive to improve the appearance of its publications the League has acquired a multigraph.

The business managements of the Fourth International, theoretical organ of the Revolutionary Workers League, and the Young Workers, organ of the Young Workers League, announce that their respective publications will soon appear in multigraphed form.

A \$75 donation for our press fund has just been received from a sympathizer.

## Three New Pamphlets

The Moscow Frame-Up Trials 1c

The Workers Answer To Boss War 5c

What Is the Young Workers League 1c

Order from DEMOS PRESS  
28 East 14th Street, N.Y.C.  
2159 West Division, Chicago

## Auto Workers Attention!

The fight against the bosses can not stop with wage increases, elimination of speed-up, union recognition and other demands.

As long as the bosses continue to own the factories, mines, mills and banks, every gain we make can be wiped out by them.

As long as they enjoy these property rights all presidents, governors, senators and judges must serve their interests against us.

Injunctions, inflation, and the use of the National Guard as strike-breakers are some of the methods they use for keeping us in bondage to the industrial barons.

The fight for higher wages and better working conditions can not be settled permanently except by the overthrow of the bosses and the bosses' government.

### A Workers Govt

In its place we must set up a workers government and workers ownership and control of production.

For that fight we must have trade unions to fight for the economic demands. But to win the final battle we need a Revolutionary Marxist Party to lead the working class and the poor farmers in their struggles against war and all forms of oppression, and to plan and direct the seizure of power.

Auto workers have shown their militancy and courage in the fight for better working conditions. We must now organize to fight for a better life, security and a Communist society.

Join the Revolutionary Workers League, U.S.